

REMARKS

By the entry of this amendment, claims 1-8 have been canceled in favor of new claims 9-13. Applicant submits that claims 9-13 are novel and unobvious over the previously cited references.

In the present invention, access restriction information is provided that includes a plurality of network addresses of servers on the network and indicates whether access to each of the servers is permitted or restricted is registered. In response to the reception of the network address of a server on the network, a determination is made based on the access restriction information as to whether access to the server that is specified by the received network address is permitted or restricted. The specified server is not accessed in a case where it is determined that the access to the specified server is restricted, while the specified server is accessed so as to acquire data therefrom in a case where it is determined that the access to the specified server is permitted. Moreover, according to the present invention, the determination of whether or not the access to the specified server is permitted is made in accordance with default settings in a case where the received network address is not included in the access restriction information.

By virtue of the unique features of the present invention, advantages can be achieved in that a server is accessed so as to acquire data therefrom in response to reception of a network address of the server to which access is permitted in advance, while a server is not accessed in response to reception of a network address of the server to which access is restricted in advance. Moreover, advantages can be achieved in a case where the received network address is not included in the access restriction information, specifically, if whether access to the server specified by the received network address is permitted or restricted is not indicated in the access restriction information, whether the access to the specified server is permitted or not is determined in accordance with default settings.

In contrast, Parry (US 2003/0030840) discloses that a printer 10 acquires a network address and PIN # and then requests a document corresponding to the PIN # of a remote device 70 corresponding to the network address, and further discloses that

the remote device 70 which received the request determines whether the PIN # is valid or invalid, and that if the PIN # is valid, the remote device 70 retrieves the requested document. The Examiner seems to take the position that determining whether the PIN # is valid or not disclosed in Parry corresponds to determining whether the access to the specified server is permitted or restricted in the present invention. Applicant disagrees, however, as Parry neither discloses nor suggests determining whether access to the remote device 70 is permitted or not, and Parry merely suggests transmitting (corresponding to "access" in the present invention) the request always to the remote device 70 (corresponding to "the specified server" in the present invention).

In other words, in the present invention, it is determined whether or not access to the specified server is permitted prior to access to the specified server, and based on the determination result, the access to the specified server is controlled. As a result, occurrence of unnecessary access to the specified server is suppressed. On the other hand, Parry merely discloses determining whether the PIN # is valid or not after the printer 10 transmits the request to the remote device 70, and neither discloses nor suggests controlling transmission of the request to the remote device 70 based on result of determination. Therefore, unnecessary transmission to the remote device 70 cannot be suppressed.

Further, the Examiner notes that Kim (US 6,943,907) discloses a printing apparatus equipped with a registration device and a determination device. However, Kim neither discloses nor suggests determining whether access to a server specified by a network address is permitted or not because Kim merely discloses executing printing of print data in response to input of a secret code identical to a secret code recorded in print type information and neither discloses nor suggests controlling access to a server so as to acquire data therefrom based on determination result.

Furthermore, Fan et al. (US 6,219,706) neither discloses nor suggests determining whether access to a server specified by a network address is permitted or not.

Moreover, none of Parry, Kim and Fan et al. disclose or suggest a situation where a received network address is not included in access restriction information, and thereby disclose or suggest whether or not access to a specified server is permitted is determined in accordance with default settings.

In view of the above, applicant submits that the previously cited references, taken singly or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the features of claims 9-13. Accordingly, the claims are in condition for allowance and the application should be passed to issuance without further delay.

Respectfully submitted,
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